

P. 528. He then gives some of their reasons.

(a) Example of Christ.

(b) They believed the communion could be best preserved in this way.

(c) Believing as they do on the authority of St. Paul, etc. I Cor. 5:7. Other reasons are given but I will not consume space with them. Polycrates who was born near the close of the second century names a number who always "kept the PASSOVER according to the Gospel." Among the eminent men he names Polycary who was ordained by the Apostle John. See *Eusebius* P. 210-212.

"As to annual festivals, it is most probable, from some hints in the New Testament (his references I Cor. 5:7, 8; 16:8; Acts 18:21; 20:6, 16) in connection with the UNIVERSAL PRACTICE of the church in the second century, that the annual celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ and of the out pouring of the Holy Ghost, answering to the Passover and Pentecost of the Jews, was introduced in the apostolic age."

The Paschal controversy . . . related NOT TO THE FACT (that is, all agreed to fact of a Christian Passover) but to the time, of the Easter festival, and, according to Polycarp and Anicet of Rome, are to be traced to an unimportant difference in the practice of the apostles." *History of the Christian Church by Philip Schaff*. P. 127.

"Easter, or the Christian Passover, is the oldest and most important annual feast of the church, and can be traced back into the first century."

"It answered to the Jewish Passover and was based on the view that Christ crucified and risen is the center of faith. . . . It had a wide scope in the early church embracing both the feast of the crucifixion and the feast of the resurrection." *Schaff* P. 374.

It seems very remarkable that Doctor Pschaff, who himself did not understand fully or keep the Christian Passover at all, yet from carefully studying the history of the church, he proves its practice to be exactly what I found in the Word before I knew the practice of the church upon this subject. Methinks it would be amusing to see the squirming, the perversion, and the denunciation of these plain facts, by our apponents. Yet nothing is more clearly taught in the history and it is not contradicted by any scripture.

What is more wonderful to me, and for which I praise God is, that from a careful study of the Bible I ascertained and contended for what afterwards I learned was the practice of the orthodox Christians of the first century.

I will now present this truth that less

than a year ago I learned that Dr. Schaff clearly established historically. Men who are old and set in their views can hardly be expected to give up error. Yet honesty and fairness ought to compel them to admit that this is not only wonderful but a strong point in our favor, especially when we consider this testimony given by one who cannot be partial in our favor. Dr. Schaff after speaking of the violent controversy not "as to the fact" of the Christian Passover, but as to the "time," he says: "The Christians of Asia Minor, following the Jewish chronology, and appealing to the authority of the apostle John and Philip, celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan, fixed the close of the feast accordingly, and seemed to have partaken in the evening of the day, after three o'clock, not indeed of the JEWISH PASCHAL LAMB, as has sometimes been supposed but of the COMMUNION and LOVE FEASTS, as the Christian Passover and the festival of the redemption completed by the death of Christ. . . . The Roman church on the contrary celebrated the death of Jesus always on Friday, and his resurrection on Sunday, after the March full moon and extended the fast to the latter day." P. 374.

He declares the first controversy about the time of the Passover was about A. D. 160 between Polycarp bishop of Smyrna and Anicet bishop of Rome. "Soon after about 170 A. D. the controversy broke out in another form in Laodicea, where it seemed a *third usage had arisen*, the Judaizing rite of eating the Paschal lamb on the fourteenth of Nisan; though this was rejected by the Asiatic bishops, Melito of Sardis and Apolinarius of Hierapolis on the ground that Jesus, according to the Gospel of John, did not eat the legal Passover, but died as the true Paschal lamb. The same argument is urged in the fragments of Hippolytus. Thus in order to harmonize the accounts . . . we have to distinguish two parties of Quartodecimans; an ORTHODOX party and a HETERODOX—in this point Judaisticone; the former of which was the more widely spread in Asia Minor, the latter limited to Laodicea." *Pschaff* 375 P.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. All Christians both Asiatic and Roman kept a Christian Passover.

(a) Asiatics on the fourteenth of the first month.

(b) The Romans on the first Sunday after the fourteenth.

2. Two Asiatic Parties.

(a) *Orthodox*.

(1) All Asia except Laodicea.

(2) Christian Passover kept without the lamb.

(3) They did not believe Christ ate the lamb.

(4) They believed Christ died the hour the lamb was to be killed.

(b) *Heterodox*.

(1) Laodicea only. The Gospel also shows that they were unfaithful. Rev. 3:14-21.

(2) They had a lamb at their Passover. The only church in Asia that had a lamb.

(3) This heterodoxy arose A. D. 170.

It is not disputed that all the Christians in the world in the second century had an annual Christian Passover, differing among themselves only a few days as to time, also a slight difference concerning constituents.

It also seems very probable that in addition to this yearly celebration of this Christian Passover, the love feasts with the Eucharist was celebrated at *other times* in the year, some celebrating them weekly, others daily; at last a number of modern historians so declare, though, as yet I have not been able to get hold of any ancient authorities upon the subject; yet I have no reason to dispute the quoted authorities.

But as to the yearly observance of the feast one must but pity the dishonesty and prejudice of those who close their eyes to and deny these plain facts.

CONCLUSION.

1. Christ ate a meal with his disciples the night of his betrayal.

2. During the ministry of the apostles they ate a meal, after the death of Christ.

3. History shows that the early church universally ate this meal as an ordinance of the Christian church.

4. We ought to keep it because Christ, the apostles, and the early church observed it.

5. We may differ as to its name, the time it should be observed, and its design but I can see no good reason for rejecting the meal.

I will close with an extract from *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul* by Conybeare and Howsen. Page 346.

The *festivals* observed by Apostolic church were at first the same with those of the Jews. . . . A higher and more spiritual meaning were attached to their celebration; and particularly the Paschal feast was kept no longer as a shadow of good things to come, but as the commemoration of the blessings actually bestowed in the death and resurrection of Christ. Thus we already see the germ of our *Easter* festival in the exhortation which St. Paul gives to the Corinthians concerning the manner in which they should celebrate the Paschal feast."